

# USAID INSIGHT

## September 23 - International Trafficking Awareness Day NGOs WORK TO STOP HUMAN SLAVERY

Over the last few years counter-trafficking efforts in Ukraine have had significant results including increasing assistance to those who are affected by this crime. Much of the secret behind the success of counter-trafficking programs in Ukraine can be attributed to experienced, motivated and active NGOs and other civil society organizations working to stop this terrible crime.

Halyna Kravets, Director of the *Revival of the Nation* NGO in Ternopil, Ukraine, began to cooperate with IOM after a girl from her town was kidnapped from a train on her way home from a job in Greece and forced into prostitution. "The girl managed to escape and was returned to Ternopil," stated Kravets. "Her father then came to us for help with reintegration, and we didn't know what to do. So we got in touch with IOM." That marked the beginning of a fruitful relationship that has matured over the years, which culminated a year ago with Ms. Kravets receiving a Civil Society Award at the IOM Annual Awards Ceremony.

During the last five years, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has expanded its civil society partner network from 15 organizations to more than 70 groups. Together with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), IOM has allocated over \$1.5 million towards activities implemented by civil society organizations. As a result of the close cooperation between IOM, partner NGOs and government law-enforcement agencies, nearly 90% of victims of trafficking are detected and assisted through grassroots NGO referral and identification systems. To sustain counter-trafficking initiatives, it is crucial to build upon already existing measures and further expand civil society support.

To date, IOM has provided hundreds of trainings and exchanges with its partner NGOs thanks to USAID financial support,



Halyna Kravets receives a Civil Society Award from Minister of Family, Youth and Sports Yuriy Pavlenko at the 2005 IOM Annual Awards Ceremony. (Photo: Courtesy of IOM)

covering everything from psychological burnout and effective counseling to business accounting training. It also provides training for NGO staff on how to sustain and enhance NGO capacity. "One of the best parts about working with IOM is the ongoing learning," revealed Kravets. "There are many interesting trainings, and IOM organizes events that give us the opportunity to exchange ideas and best practices with other NGOs, and even with government bodies."

The International Organization for Migration and its partner NGOs have also initiated several national and regional public awareness counter-trafficking campaigns, provided legal consultations through informational

hotlines, and developed an effective referral and monitoring system to facilitate the sustainable and safe reintegration of victims of trafficking. In Ukraine the vast majority of beneficiaries assisted by IOM and its partner NGOs have managed to create a future for themselves in Ukraine; only 2 percent of them return abroad.

In their joint efforts, IOM, USAID and partner NGOs have a symbiotic relationship. On one hand, IOM and USAID are able to provide financial assistance, training and network coordination. On the other hand, the partner NGOs are able to mature institutionally and receive opportunities to share innovative ideas with IOM that are often turned into projects or best practices.

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## 9 MYTHS ABOUT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

**Myth 1. Trafficking can never happen to me.**

Trafficking can happen to anyone. Traffickers use increasingly clever schemes to trick people into cooperating with them for jobs that will never materialize. No one is immune from the threat unless they understand the risk and educate themselves about how to protect themselves.

**FACT:** Between 2000 and 2006, the IOM mission in Ukraine assisted more than 3,000 victims of trafficking.

**Myth 2. Going abroad is completely safe.**

Going abroad to work, to study or travel is not safe without complete and accurate information. Don't leave home without knowledge about relevant regulations and laws, places to get information, people to contact at your destination, and copies of your travel documents.

**FACT:** It is estimated that approximately 10% of the Ukrainian population working abroad has limited or no legal protection.

**Myth 3. Trafficking can't happen in my own country, only abroad.**

Trafficking happens not only abroad, but in Ukraine. People end up being trafficked and enslaved even in their own country. A person may travel to another location within his or her own country for a job, and still subsequently fall into involuntary servitude.

**FACT:** While Ukraine is primarily the country of origin, it is also a transit country and final destination for victims of trafficking.

# NGO Trafficking Prevention Activity Helps Women Avoid Falling Prey to Traffickers

**M**ila, a divorced mother, worked in a Zhytomyr city hospital. On her modest physician's salary, she supported her 10-year-old daughter and elderly parents. Her income was so small that she barely could make ends meet. Always looking for that elusive good-paying job, she regularly scanned the regional newspapers in search of advertisements for migration or employment abroad.

One day she found an ad for a well-paid job taking care of elderly people in Italy. Mila called the agency inquiring about the terms of the contract and criteria she had to meet as a potential employee. Her interest piqued by what she was initially told, she asked if she could come by the agency to talk in detail about the offer. An office worker politely declined and suggested they meet at a city park.

The agency's representative turned out to be a handsome young man with endearing communication skills and a seemingly genuine concern. He seemed to take Mila's financial problems very seriously and offered on the spot help in getting ready for work in Italy. He promised to take care of all visa and passport requirements within a week and offered the agency's assistance in covering visa support services and air tickets. He told Mila that she could repay the ex-

penses they would incur from her first salary in Italy. Mila agreed without hesitation.

On her way home, Mila was flush with excitement and thoughts of her new life. However, her mood changed when a friend told her about a television program she had recently seen about the risks of becoming a victim of human trafficking, and ways to counter and avoid being sucked into this modern day slavery. The program also highlighted the work of Avenir, a counter-trafficking NGO in Zhytomyr that publicizes the work of illegal and criminal phantom agencies, which recruit citizens and turn them into powerless slaves.

Avenir belongs to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) counter-trafficking partner NGO network. Part of its trafficking prevention activities are funded by the USAID project, Counter-Trafficking in Persons in Ukraine.

Mila contacted the NGO to find out more



IOM Counter-Trafficking poster warning Ukrainians about the dangers of falling prey to traffickers by featuring a passport stamped with the word "SOLD." (Courtesy of IOM)

about the agency that was recruiting her. With help from the Zhytomyr Ministry of Interior Counter-Trafficking Unit, the NGO discovered that the agency recruiting Mila was not registered and did not officially exist. Mila was shocked. She realized she had barely escaped a direct assault on her freedom, health and the future of her family.

## IOM and USAID Provide Assistance to Enslaved Sailors

**T**rafficking is not just a young woman's problem. Men are often forced to labor in construction and agriculture. In 2006, IOM provided reintegration assistance to a group of Ukrainian men who were trafficked to be exploited as slave labor in the Russian fishing industry.

A group of at least 24 men aged 18-50 were lured onto a boat after they accepted bogus job offers, allegedly to work on industrial fishing vessels for salaries ranging between \$1,200 and \$1,600 a month.

Once the men arrived in Russia's Far East, they were tricked into giving up their passports and were put to work doing slave labor without adequate food or water aboard an old Russian fishing vessel that was crab poaching off Sakhalin Island in the North Pacific.

"The men suffered from severe sleep deprivation," says IOM's Fred Larsson in Ukraine. "They were severely physically and psychologically abused."

The men were variously enslaved on the boat without pay from 6 to 11 months.

When a Russian coastguard contingent patrolling the North Pacific seized and impounded the vessel for poaching it found the exhausted men. IOM Ukraine helped to get the men back to Kyiv and reintegrated into society. The Russian local prosecutor has begun a criminal case in the matter.

With up to 2 million Ukrainians estimated to be currently living abroad, and others eager to join them, potential migrants are in critical need of accurate information before making the crucial decision of whether to go abroad for work, study or travel.

## 9 MYTHS ABOUT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

### Myth 4. Trafficking is not a crime.

Trafficking is a criminal offence in Ukraine and many other countries, punishable with up to 15 years in jail. Since 2000, Ukraine has had a dedicated law enforcement body working on the issues of trafficking.

**FACT:** In 2005, Ukraine upgraded its trafficking law - Article 149 of the Criminal Code — which is in compliance with the Palermo Protocol.

### Myth 5. Trafficking only concerns prostitution.

Prostitution is only one of the many ways traffickers exploit people. Trafficking in human beings is modern day slavery, whether for the purposes of prostitution, construction work, agricultural work, in sweat shops, in child pornography or even as organ donors.

**FACT:** The youngest victim of trafficking assisted by IOM Ukraine was a 3-year-old forced to beg; the oldest, a 73-year-old in forced labor.

### Myth 6. Only young women are trafficked.

Trafficking is not just a problem for young women. Men are often forced to labor in construction and agriculture, while older women are used for domestic servitude, particularly as nurses and housekeepers. Children, as young as three, are made to beg.

**FACT:** From 2004 to 2006, 17.3% of all IOM-assisted victims in Ukraine were men.

# ROCK GROUP GETS INVOLVED IN RAISING AWARENESS

Last year, Ukrainians walking down Khreschatyk in Kyiv could see posters of Slava Vakarchuk, front man for the popular rock group, *Okean Elzy*, addressing a burning social issue: the fight against human slavery. From the posters, he urged young people to get more information before traveling abroad so as not to fall prey to traffickers.

According to the National Survey on Trafficking Issues that USAID sponsored, 99% of respondents in Ukraine know about the problem, but only 15% believe that it could happen to them. The horrible facts show that no one is immune. Over the past five years, IOM in Ukraine has provided assistance to 3,000 victims of trafficking, the vast majority of whom had never seriously thought that they might fall prey to traffickers, until it happened to them.

form of slavery, the International Organization for Migration has conducted three national awareness campaigns for two years now with the support of USAID, Ukrainian counter-trafficking NGOs, the MTV Europe Foundation and other international organizations.

*Okean Elzy*, Ukraine's most-beloved band, was an integral part of last year's awareness campaign. "Trafficking in persons is one of today's most painful and serious problems," explained Vakarchuk. "*Okean Elzy* decided to take responsibility to draw attention to this problem and help IOM prevent trafficking."

Last fall, during *Okean Elzy's* 30-city tour, some 100,000 concertgoers received information on how to protect themselves when going abroad to work, study or travel. Before each concert, IOM NGO partners

"The importance of role models such as *Okean Elzy* should not be underestimated for preventive and advocacy efforts. Through *Okean Elzy's* active involvement we have the possibility of reaching out to risk groups, raising awareness and changing attitudes far more effectively," said Fredric Larsson, IOM Counter-Trafficking Program Coordinator for Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.

*Okean Elzy's* Vakarchuk also endorsed a counter-trafficking public service announcement (PSA) that draws attention to the dangers faced by thousands of Ukrainians as they go looking for a better destiny abroad. In the PSA, no one pays attention to what a flight attendant is saying until they realize she is describing their future in slavery. "Thousands of Ukrainians are going abroad. Lots of them fall prey to lies and



A series of stop frames from the PSA in which the flight attendant says: "Please be careful as you may in fact be walking into a trap where you will be forced into slavery and prostitution. You may be stripped of your passport and forced to work for long hours without pay."

Public information campaigns are a crucial component of efforts to counter human trafficking in Ukraine. In regions where there is little access to objective information about trafficking in human beings, such campaigns are extremely important.

To alert Ukrainians about this modern

explained to visitors what trafficking is, what the consequences are, and how not to fall prey to modern forms of slavery. During the concert, Vakarchuk spoke of the need to be more careful and ask more questions regarding the possible dangers and consequences of going abroad.

violence. Remember there are no easy ways in life. Protect yourself!" urges Vakarchuk. At the end, the PSA provides a telephone hotline 8-800-505-50-10 where all interested can receive practical advice so as to avoid becoming victims of human trafficking.

## 9 MYTHS ABOUT TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

**Myth 7. Only uneducated people from rural areas are trafficked.**

Many victims of trafficking have partial or full university educations, and many are from urban areas. These include accountants, nurses, teachers, pilots, engineers, etc.

**FACT:** 54% of the victims of trafficking surveyed attended or completed college or university.

**Myth 8. Victims of trafficking can escape any time.**

Victims are sometimes physically confined, their travel or identity documents are taken away, and they or their families are threatened or blackmailed if they do not cooperate. Traffickers also play on victims' fears that authorities in the country will prosecute and deport them if they ask for help.

**FACT:** Victims of trafficking are often resold from one owner to another. IOM has assisted Ukrainian victims to return from over 50 countries.

**Myth 9. Nobody helps victims of trafficking in Ukraine.**

IOM and over 70 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) provide assistance, including medical, psychological, legal, as well as educational and vocational training and assistance to the families affected, among other services.

**FACT:** The counter-trafficking network has expanded to include community leaders, church groups and governmental counterparts in every oblast of Ukraine.



# CLERGY STEPS INTO FIGHT HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Father Andriy Pinchuk expresses his thanks after receiving an IOM Counter-Trafficking Award. (Photo: Courtesy of IOM)

**R**eligious organizations, considered to be among the most sustainable and influential social institutions in Ukraine, are one of the key links in the powerful chain that links international anti-trafficking efforts with a variety of Ukrainian institutions. Many religious leaders are at the forefront of the effort to eradicate this violent crime.

Last year, the Rev. Andriy Pinchuk, an Orthodox priest, received an IOM Counter-Trafficking Award for having helped a 15-year-old victim of sexual exploitation to reintegrate into society after she returned to Ukraine, including helping her relearn her native tongue and complete a basic education. United States Ambassador John E. Herbst, who presented the award to the priest, said: "All of us should actively show the compassion, the support and the love that the Rev. Pinchuk has exhibited, so every victim will understand that s/he has nothing to fear. They need to know they have nothing to be ashamed of, but should step forward and ask for help with the full confidence that we will provide. We can put an end to this tragedy once and for all if we work together."

Today, more and more religious organizations are getting involved in combating trafficking. To broaden the range of channels through which information about trafficking is provided, IOM has launched a Training of Trainers initiative for religious leaders across Ukraine. Those trained can in turn

reach out to their parishes and conduct prevention activities in their communities.

In Kyiv, the Training of Trainers was recently held for leaders of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Afterwards, the Crimean Eparchy conducted four seminars of their own for priests and seminary students on how to counter trafficking in human beings. During an official meeting of leading clergy in Crimea, Metropolitan Lazarus of Crimea spoke on the issue, and gave his blessing for local

priests to start raising awareness within their parishes, as well as informing children during Sunday school classes. All 260 priests who attended received educational brochures describing the trafficking problem.

In western Ukraine, Lviv Archbishop Augustine of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, discussed the importance of counter-trafficking during an eparchial gathering of the clergy, which 60 priests attended.

Additionally, IOM has conducted multiple workshops for representatives of various faiths around Ukraine, including Baptist, Pentecostal, Evangelical, New Life and the Nazarene confessions, as well as with religious-based organizations such as CCX and Emmanuel. IOM has also established contacts with other religious-based organizations, including the Salvation Army and Jesuit Refugee Services that are also willing to contribute to counter-trafficking activities.

In response to the information on human trafficking provided to various religious communities, members of these communities have approached IOM for further informational materials, as well as to inquire about initiatives related to conducting awareness raising campaigns in their congregations and broader projects involving clergy around Ukraine. Such enthusiasm clearly indicates that religious organizations are taking an active stand in support of counter-trafficking in persons.

## Are You in Danger?

Check how Vulnerable You are to Becoming a Victim of Trafficking

- Are you trying to make a better life for yourself or your family?**
  - Yes, isn't everyone? (10 points)
  - No, I'm just trying to get by. (5 points)
- Do you think it is impossible for you to become a trafficking victim?**
  - No, it can happen to anyone! (5 points)
  - Yes, I'm definitely not at risk. (10 points)
- Are you a female or male between the ages of 16-45 years old?**
  - Yes. (10 points)
  - No. (5 points)
- Do you have a completed higher education?**
  - Yes. (5 points)
  - No. (10 points)
- Do you live in a big city?**
  - Yes. (10 points)
  - I live in a small city/town. (5 points)
  - I live in a village. (2 points)
- Are you considering going abroad?**
  - Yes, I would like to work, study or travel abroad. (10 points)
  - No, I will stay in Ukraine. (5 points)
- Would you work abroad without a work visa or a contract?**
  - Yes, sometimes these are the only opportunities. (10 points)
  - No, I would not consider illegal migration. (5 points)
- Would you give your passport to anyone beside a government official?**
  - Yes, sometimes it is necessary to give it to a friend, business associate or travel agency. (10 points)
  - No, I would only give a copy. (0 points)
- Do you know how people are trafficked?**
  - Yes. (5 points)
  - No, since it doesn't apply to me. (10 points)
- Do you know the appropriate salaries and working conditions outside of Ukraine?**
  - Yes. (5 points)
  - No. (10 points)

### Results:

**76 to 100 points** - You are at **HIGH RISK** and could become a trafficking victim.

**51 to 75 points** - You are at **MEDIUM RISK**. Before going to work, study or travel abroad, find out more to make sure you are safe.

**10 to 50 points** - You are at **LOW RISK** and well-informed about how to protect yourself.

Trafficking victims are often ambitious people, many of whom are university graduates or employed who are looking for better economic opportunities or to study or travel abroad. Victims are men and women of all ages, backgrounds and classes

Check out any offer to go abroad and take all precautions to protect yourself and your loved ones. Send any questions you have to [zakordon@iom.kiev.ua](mailto:zakordon@iom.kiev.ua) or call **8-800-505 5010**



The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) principal mission in Ukraine is to help the country to complete the transition to a broad-based democracy with a market-oriented economy. USAID assistance focuses on the following areas: **Economic Growth, Democracy and Governance, Health and Social Sector**. Since 1992, the USAID has provided \$1.6 billion worth of technical and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine to further the processes of democratic development, economic restructuring and social sector reform in the region. To obtain additional information about USAID programs in Ukraine please visit the USAID website at: <http://ukraine.usaid.gov> or e-mail [omyrtsalo@usaid.gov](mailto:omyrtsalo@usaid.gov)